In the Claims:

1.(Currently amended) A medical device comprising:

a flexible shaft comprising a pulling member movable therein, the flexible shaft having sufficient flexibility to be formed into an operable, looped configuration during use;

an actuating mechanism operatively associated with a proximal end of the flexible shaft;

an end effector associated with the distal end of the flexible shaft, wherein the end effector is operatively associated with a distal end of the pulling member; and

wherein the actuator mechanism has a first configuration in which the actuator mechanism is decoupled from the pulling member, and a second configuration wherein the actuator mechanism becomes operatively coupled to the pulling member to operate the end effector.

2. (original) The device of Claim 1 wherein the actuator mechanism comprises an actuator movable from a first position wherein the actuator mechanism is decoupled from the pulling member to a second member wherein the actuator mechanism becomes operatively coupled to the pulling member.

3. (original) The device of Claim 2 wherein the actuator is movable from the second position to a third position wherein the end effector is operated.

4. (original) The device of Claim 1 wherein the actuating mechanism comprises a resilient member for operatively coupling the actuation member to the pulling member.

5. (original) The device of Claim 4 wherein the resilient member comprises a spring.

6. (original) The device of Claim 5 wherein the resilient member comprises a torsion spring.

7. (original) The device of Claim 3 wherein the actuator is movable from the first position to the second position by squeezing with a single hand.

8. (original) The device of Claim 1 wherein a proximal end of the pulling member is joined to a relatively larger diameter member, and wherein the actuator mechanism engages the relatively larger diameter member to provide coupling of the actuator mechanism to the pulling member.

9. (original) The device of Claim 8 wherein the actuator mechanism engages the relatively larger diameter member by gripping engagement.

10. (original) The device of Claim 8 wherein the gripping engagement is provided by a resilient member.

11. (original) The device of Claim 10 wherein the resilient member comprises a torsion spring.

12. (original) The device of Claim 1 wherein the end effector is selected from the group consisting of a biopsy forceps, grasping forceps, surgical scissors, extractors, and snares.

13.(Withdrawn) A medical device comprising:

a flexible shaft comprising a pulling member movable within the flexible shaft;
a sleeve fixed to a proximal portion of the pulling member;
an actuator apparatus comprising a gripping member for releasably engaging the sleeve;
an end effector operatively associated with a distal end of the pulling member;
wherein the actuator apparatus has a first configuration in which the gripping member is disengaged from the sleeve, and a second configuration wherein the gripping member engages the sleeve.

14. (Withdrawn) The medical device of Claim 13 wherein the gripping member comprises a coil spring.

15. (Withdrawn) A medical device comprising:
a flexible shaft capable of being deformed to form a loop;
a control wire movably disposed within the flexible shaft;
an end effector operatively associated with a distal end of the control wire;
an actuator lever movable to provide operation of the end effector; and
an apparatus for providing a pulling force to the proximal end of the control wire, wherein the apparatus releasably engages the proximal end of the control wire in response to movement of the actuator lever.